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New Records of the Damselfly *Ischnura prognata* in Virginia

Dirk J. Stevenson, Steven M. Roble and Christopher S. Hobson

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Division of Natural Heritage

1500 E. Main Street, Suite 312

Richmond, VA 23219

In a recent review of the damselflies of Virginia, Roble (1994) reported that *Ischnura prognata* (Hagen) was apparently among the rarest of the 53 species known from the state. Only one historical (1938) and one recent (1994) record were known for *I. prognata* from the City of Williamsburg and Surry County, respectively. This species is scarce throughout its range, which extends from southeastern New York south to Florida and west to Indiana and eastern Texas (Donnelly, 1992; Dunkle, 1990). Its preferred habitats are swamp edges and shaded seepage areas (Dunkle, 1990).

During the 1995 field season, we encountered *I. prognata* in eastern Virginia with surprising frequency despite the lack of a directed survey for this species. Beating vegetation with sweep nets was an effective means of flushing the adults, which were then easily captured. The following six new city and county records were documented:

Accomack Co.: Wallops Flight Facility, 2.2 km NE of Wattsville, 23 May 1995, C. S. Hobson, 1 male;

City of Chesapeake: Northwest River, approximately 4.0 km SE of Northwest, 10 May 1995, D. J. Stevenson, 2 males (one collected); same site, 21-22 May 1995, D. J. Stevenson, 8 males and 4 females observed; Northwest River Park, Smith Creek at Baum Road boat launch, 4 October 1995, S. M. Roble, 1 female;

Fairfax Co.: Fort Belvoir, 2.0 km S of Pohick (junction Routes 1 and 611), 30 May 1995, S. M. Roble, 2 females; Greensville Co.: Fontaine Creek at Route

301, 7 May 1995, D. J. Stevenson, 1 male;

City of Virginia Beach: ditch adjacent to Pungo Ferry Road on west side of North Landing River, 10 May 1995, D. J. Stevenson, 2 females;

York Co.: City of Newport News Grafton Ponds Natural Area Preserve, 15 May 1995, D. J. Stevenson, 4 males and 2 females (2 males collected); same site, 18 May 1995, D. J. Stevenson, 2 females (one collected).

The specimens collected on 7 May and 4 October represent new early and late flight dates, respectively, for *I. prognata* in Virginia (Roble, 1994). The Fort Belvoir site is the first record for this species from the vicinity of Washington, D. C. (Donnelly, 1961; Orr, 1995a, 1995b). The habitat at this site, as well as that in Accomack County, is a forested seepage wetland. All of our other collection sites except those in York County are bottomland hardwood swamps. The dozen *I. prognata* adults observed on 21-22 May in the City of Chesapeake were in mature bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*)-tupelo gum (*Nyssa aquatica*) swamp forest adjacent to the Northwest River. Most of these individuals were flushed from shallow portions of the swamp supporting profuse growth of lizard tail (*Saururus cernuus*) and sedges (*Carex* spp.). The two York County collections were made at semipermanent sinkhole ponds.

These new collections reveal that *I. prognata* is considerably more common in Virginia than previously believed. The dearth of previous records is attributed to limited survey efforts in appropriate habitats in the past. This species undoubtedly occurs

in additional swampy habitats in southeastern Virginia.

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